

[John Ells]

[LM?] [?] DUP

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W St., Lincoln

DATE October 25, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore, Lincoln, Nebr.

1. Name and address of informant John Ells, 321 G St.
2. Date and time of interview Tuesday, 1 to 2:30
3. Place of interview 321 G St.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant None
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you None
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Is bachelor but lives with sister in a convenient home. Old-fashioned, frugal. [???

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W St., Lincoln

DATE October 25, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT John Ells, 321 G St., Lincoln, Nebr.

1. Ancestry Swedish

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2. Place and date of birth Switzerland, 1873
3. Family Swedish
4. Places lived in, with dates Came to Nebraska in 1890
5. Education, with dates 8th grade
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Farmer. Now owns much property and is a landlord.
7. Special skills and interests None especially but works on his property.
8. Community and religious activities None
9. Description of informant Small, wizened appearance.
10. Other points gained in interview None except thrift has been his object.

FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER George Hartman ADDRESS 2438 W. Lincoln, Nebr.

DATE October 25, 1938 SUBJECT Folklore

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT John Ells, 321 G St., Lincoln, Nebr.

There were no cars in those days (nineties) but everyone knew where there was to be a dance. '[We?]' would ride around on horseback and notify the people that there was to be a dance. It was nothing to walk ten to twenty miles to a dance. Some of the young bucks would have their jug of whiskey over their shoulder and would hoof it to the dance taking a nip now and then to keep them warm and to be "popped up" for the dance. People had

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more fun in those days than they do now and a dance was an all-night occasion. The dance would start at eight o'clock in the evening and probably continue until the next day.

People also would play cards by the day instead of the hour. Pitch and seven-up were the favorite card games and the people enjoyed these games immensely although lots of times the game would end in a fight or a lot of cuss-words.

As I said there weren't any conveniences in those days like today and it was nothing at all to see the farmers out milking their cow in a blizzard.

When cars came the people would leave them right out in the open as they didn't have garages like we do now behind each house. Then again, it was funny to see the horses get scared because of an approaching car and run away down a street.

There were many more flies in the earlier days then there are now. The woman would pick up branches from trees and fan the flies away from the men working in the harvest fields.

Many of the people get discouraged because of the drouths and left the farms for the cities. To keep discouragement away, there was a song that ran something like this: Don't be in a hurry to go Stay with your farm awhile, The city has many attractions, But think of the vices and [?] Don't be in a hurry to go Think of your farm awhile.

But many of the people left and I think that those who stayed on the farms came out further ahead.

I've lived on a farm most of my life and I think that people were better off 40 years ago than now because their land was given to them in the form of homesteads and they didn't have the government taxing them to death and the worries they have now.